

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00

SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 SAM-01 /067 W

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FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 8004

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION NATO

USEC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 8775

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, SP

SUBJECT: SUAREZ PULLS IT OFF-- POLITICAL REFORM BILL WINS
BY WIDE MARGIN

1. STANDING FIRM IN THE DOWN-TO-THE-WIRE

GAME OF NERVES OVER ITS POLITICAL REFORM BILL, THE
SUAREZ GOVERNMENT GRANTED ONLY COSMETIC CONCESSIONS
TO CONSERVATIVE CONCERNS IN AGREEING TO A FORMULA THAT
OBTAINED WELL OVER THE REQUIRED MARGIN OF CORTES
SUPPORT -- SUBJECT TO CONFIRMATION, 425 IN FAVOR, 59
AGAINST, 13 ABSTENTIONS, AND 34 ABSENT.

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2. THE "COMPROMISE" FORMULA INVOLVED THE MAJORITY-VS-PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION ELECTION SYSTEM THAT HAD BECOME FOCAL POINT OF CORTES DEBATE. IN A SPEECH WHICH MADE CLEAR THE CAPITULATION OF THE ALIANZA POPULAR, CRUZ MARTINEZ ESTERUELAS EXPRESSED ACCEPTANCE OF THE GOVERNMENT-PROPOSED PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION FOR THE LOWER HOUSE PROVIDED THAT THE "CORRECTIVE DISPOSITIONS" WERE TIGHTENED REPRESENTATION FOR EACH PROVINCE ASSURED, AND A FLOOR ESTABLISHED TO PREVENT THE ACCESS OF MINI-GROUPS. THE LANGUAGE SUBSEQUENTLY PROVIDED BY THE SUBCOMMITTEE (DETAILS TO BE SENT WHEN THE OFFICAL TEXT IS IN HAND), ACTING ON THE GOVERNMENT'S BEHALF, DREW APPLAUSE FROM THE ASSEMBLED DEPUTIES BUT DID NOT, AS WE KNOW FROM MANY PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS OVER THE PAST WEEKS AND MONTHS, REPRESENT ANY SUBSTANTIVE ALTERATION OF THE GOVERNMENT'S POSITION.

3. THE ALIANZA POPULAR, MAY FEEL THAT THE FINAL LANGUAGE ASSURES IT OF SOME EXTRA SEATS THROUGH THE DE FACTO CONVERSION OF THE SMALLEST PROVINCES INTO SINGLE-MEMBER DISTRICTS (ALTHOUGH THE ACTUAL MINIMUM NUMBER OF REPRESENTATIVES FOR EACH PROVINCE REMAINS TO BE DETERMINED), BUT EVEN ON THIS POINT WE KNOW THE GOVERNMENT HAD ALWAYS LOOKED TO THE PROVINCE AS THE BASIC ELECTORAL DISTRICT. IN YIELDING, THE ALIANZA DID CONFIRM ITS POSITION AS THE GOVERNMENT'S PRINCIPAL INTERLOCUTOR ON THE RIGHT IN THE NEGOTIATIONS ON THE ELECTORAL LAW WHICH THE GOS WILL DECREE.

4. THE LONG PROCESS THAT BEGAN WITH FRANCO'S DEATH ALMOST A YEAR AGO REACHED ITS DENOUEMENT THIS EVENING, WITH THE FRANCO-ER CORTES, AFTER ALL THE RHETORIC WAS DONE, AGREEING TO THE CREATION OF A DEMOCRATIC PARLIAMENT TO WRITE A NEW CONSTITUTION FOR POST-FRANCO SPAIN. THE OUTCOME OF THE REFERENDUM, TO BE HELD BETWEEN DECEMBER 12 AND 19, IS A FOREGONE CONCLUSION, WITH LATEST POLL DATA SUGGESTING SIXTY-SIX PERCENT OF THE ELEGIBLE VOTERS WILL VOTE YES. AND IN RESPECT OF THE TRICKY CONSULTATIONS WITH THE OPPOSITION ON THE ELCTORAL LAW FOR THE CORTES ELECTIONS IN SPRING, SUAREZ, AFTER THIS PARLIAMENTARY VICTORY, WILL BE DEALING FROM A POSITION OF CONSIDERABLE STRENGTH.

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